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warm terms of the benefits conferred upon his country by the geological labours of Sir Roderick Murchison, and for which the Russians were truly grateful.

The following Papers were then read :—

1. *Notes on the Russian Harbours of Possiette, Wladivostock, Nakhodka, and Olga Bay, on the Coast of Manchuria.* By the Rev. W. V. LLOYD, R.N., F.R.G.S.

THE author visited the Russian settlements on the coast of Manchuria in the summer of 1866, when he was serving as chaplain on board H.M.S. 'Scylla,' Capt. Courtenay. The vessel left Nagasaki, in Japan, on the 20th of July, and arrived at Possiette (now called Novgorodski) on the 25th. The general aspect of the country was dreary, being hilly and destitute of timber; a dozen log-houses marked the site of the Russian settlement. Russia has found here what she has long coveted, a harbour where her fleets can pass in and out during the winter season; perfectly sheltered by surrounding hills, with deep water, an impregnable position, and a good supply of coal on the spot. The Tu-men River, the boundary between the newly-acquired Russian territory and Korea, runs within 30 miles of the settlement. The Chinese or Manchu town of Hun-chun is situated 25 miles above its mouth, and contains a population of from 6000 to 10,000. Russia has taken complete military possession of the coast, as well as of the Khinka Lake, in the interior, and the right bank of the Usuri River, a branch of which flows out of the lake, and is navigable down to the Amur. Drafts of regiments or of sailors are established every ten miles, and the men are diligently employed in making the great military road, which is to connect the coast settlements with the Amur. A telegraphic line was expected soon to be laid between Novgorodski and the Amur, between which and St. Petersburg there is already telegraphic communication. The protection of a Russian garrison had induced more than 300 families of Koreans to establish themselves within the Russian frontier.

The next settlement to the north of Novgorodski is Wladivostock, or Port May. The thermometer here, in January to March, sometimes descends as low as  $-15^{\circ}$  to  $-20^{\circ}$  Fahr., and the harbour is closed up by ice during those months. The land is of excellent quality, and moderately covered with timber. With the exception of seven foreign merchants, the settlement may be said to be purely military, like Novgorodski; but it is more flourishing, and it derives great importance from being the nearest coast station to the head of navigation on the Usuri River, which will form the principal means of communication with Eastern Siberia, owing to

the lower part of the Amur, further northward, being frozen up during several months of the year. The nearest practicable route from Wladivostock to the point where steam navigation on the Usuri commences is 200 miles. The River Suifun, at the head of Guérin Gulf, a distance of about 20 miles from the settlement, is navigable for good-sized boats to within 40 miles of the Lefu River, which flows northerly towards the Usuri, and empties itself into the Khinka Lake. A small steamer was soon expected to ply upon the Lefu. A thorough official survey was made of this important line of communication, in 1859, under the direction of Colonel Budogorsky. The length of the Usuri, which is the most important southern tributary of the Amur next to the Sungari, is 497 miles. Lake Khinka is about 60 miles long by 40 wide, and its banks are now dotted with Cossack settlements.

This paper will be published *in extenso* in the 'Journal,' vol. xxxvii.

The PRESIDENT said the paper was a popular sketch of the present condition of the Russian settlements in Manchuria, part of the information being derived, as stated by the author, from Russian sources. He was glad that Mr. Lloyd bore testimony to the readiness with which Russian officials communicated information respecting the geography and productions of the countries they occupied.

Captain SHERARD OSBORN said that, in listening to the paper, he was impressed with the great fact that the Russian inhabitants and Government in Siberia were struggling with enormous difficulties in their endeavours to obtain access to the eastern seas and a more genial climate. This desire was a very natural and legitimate one. The great population of Siberia, extending from Orenburg to the mouth of the Amur, had to contend with serious physical difficulties in obtaining easy communication with the east and south. The harbours on the eastern coast were frozen up for a considerable portion of the winter. He had himself seen ice two feet in thickness in the bay, and, if he remembered rightly, ice was the first article of export from Russian Manchuria. Englishmen ought to be the first to lend a helping hand to these northern settlers who were struggling with the difficulties of such a climate, and to encourage them to find a better outlet than they had at present to those tropical regions of Asia, where alone could be found the products necessary for the wants, comforts, and luxuries of European existence. The fact that telegraphic lines were being extended from the Amur to Lake Khinka was well worthy of attention. It was remarkable that the telegraph and the highway—those two great desiderata to the importance of which the English Government were only just awakening in British India—were actually established in advance of immigration in this new Russian territory; and it did great credit to the Russian Government that they should so early appreciate their importance to the settlers struggling with so severe a climate.

Mr. SAUNDERS observed, that many of the rivers named in the old Jesuit maps of the shores of Chinese Tartary appeared to have escaped the notice of the English, French, and Russian marine surveyors, who had made charts of those coasts in our time. One of those rivers, the Tourho, was alluded to in the first accounts received here of the Russian acquisitions on the Usuri; and it was only to be found on the Jesuit maps. He hoped that attention would be paid to those old maps in future surveys.

The PRESIDENT said, it was always the practice of Russian geographers to

retain the names used in the countries they explored. Thus, the Jaxartes of the ancients was the Syr Daria of the Russians, and the Oxus of the ancients their Amu Daria.

The Rev. Mr. LLOYD said that the Russian navy and surveyors had gone very regularly over that portion of the coast which Mr. Saunders had referred to; and the Master of the *Scylla* was much indebted to the Russian officers while on his visit there, not only for the information they gave, but also for the admirably executed maps which they allowed him to see. A mistake in the English charts was detected and made good by comparison with the Russian charts. The Russian determinations had been made with great accuracy.

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2. *On Communication between India and China by the line of the Burhampooter and Yang-tse.* By General Sir ARTHUR COTTON, R.E.

THE Author stated that orders had been lately issued to survey the line of country in Lower Burmah or Pegu as far as our own frontier, in the direction of the Chinese province of Yunan, with a view to the establishment of a line of route between our Indian possessions and China; but he thought it very strange that so important a question as internal communication between India and China, should be treated in such an imperfect way. No attempt had been made to consider the real question, which was, what would be the best line for such a communication. He conceived the question of throwing open all India, with its population of 200 millions, to all China and its 400 millions of people, was of such great importance that it required a much more serious consideration than had yet been given to it. There were three conclusive objections to the connection with Rangoon. 1st. It would lead the traffic to an insignificant port, instead of directing it to the great port of India and the seat of Government. 2nd. It would not connect the great body of India with China, but only an insignificant province containing two millions of people. 3rd. There were 900 miles of land-carriage between Rangoon and the Yang-tse; whereas it was essential to approach much nearer the great line of water-carriage in China, by which all the great traffic of the country was carried on.

The line which best fulfilled the necessary conditions of the shortest possible land-carriage was the direct one between the Burhampooter and the Yang-tse, the distance between the navigable parts of which was only about 250 miles. This was the only interruption in a prospective line of internal water-communication between Kurrachee and the whole interior and seaboard of China, for the Indus and the Ganges would be sooner or later connected by means of a canal between the Sutlej and the Jumna. The line thus suggested had the advantage of being not only the shortest,